

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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2013 Yukon River Fall Salmon Fishery News Release # 24

Fall Update # 4, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

Fall Season Assessment

The projected 2013 fall chum salmon run size based on inseason assessment ranges between 700,000 and 900,000 fish. Five pulses of fall chum salmon have been observed entering Yukon River. The most recent pulse began passing the Lower Yukon River test fisheries on August 16, it is currently passing the Pilot Station sonar and is estimated to be at least 130,000 fish in size.

Coho salmon have been increasing in Yukon River. The first pulse of coho salmon passed the Lower Yukon River test fisheries on August 12. A second group of sustained passage has entered the river and is currently passing Pilot Station sonar. The 2013 coho salmon run approached the first quarter point on August 16 and current assessment is below average for the early portion of the run.

Lower Yukon River Cooperative Drift Test Fishing – YDFDA, ADF&G

The cumulative CPUE for fall chum salmon through August 18 was 2,016.22, which is above the historical median of 1,002.56 for that date. The cumulative CPUE through August 18 for coho salmon was 199.24, which is slightly above the historical median of 179.46 for that date.

Pilot Station Sonar Project - ADF&G

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage through August 18 is approximately 444,300 fish, which is above the median passage of 402,000 fish for that date. The cumulative coho salmon passage through August 18 is approximately 33,550 fish, which is below the median passage of 49,700 fish for that date.

Rapids Test Fish Wheel Project - Zuray

The cumulative fall chum salmon CPUE through August 18 is approximately 4,400 fish, which is below the historical median of 5,700 fish for that date. The cumulative based on the adjusted water level is also below the historical median for that date.

Chandalar Sonar Project - USFWS

The cumulative passage attributed to fall chum salmon from August 18 is approximately 11,400 fish, which is above the historical median of 8,200 fish for that date.

Eagle Sonar Project - ADF&G

The cumulative Chinook salmon passage at Eagle sonar is estimated to be approximately 30,700 through August 18, which is below the average of 53,800 for that date. A passage of this size is below the Interim Management Escapement Goal of 42,500 to 55,000 adopted by the joint US-Canada Yukon River Panel and will not provide for Canadian harvest share levels specified in the Treaty Agreement. The project is transitioning to counting fall chum salmon August 19 for inseason purposes with adjustment made post season.

Age Composition

The fall chum salmon age composition from the 6" LYTF drift nets through August 17 was 61.2% age-4, 37.2% age-5, and 1.5% age-6 fish. The average age-4 fish is 65.2% for this date and average age-5 fish 33.2%. Females contributed 55.6% to the samples, which is near the average of 56.3%. The sample size was 816 fish for ages and 833 for gender.

The coho salmon age composition from the 6" LYTF drift nets through August 16 was 17.8% age-3, 75.3% age-4, and 6.9% age-5 fish. The respective averages are 15.3% age-3, 76.3% age-4, and 5.2% age-5 fish for this date. Females contributed 30.2% to the samples, which is below the average of 42.9%. The sample size was 124 fish for ages and 132 for gender.

Fall Season Management

In accordance with the Yukon River Drainage Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan, a total run ranging from 700,000 to 900,000 fish is adequate for escapement needs, full subsistence opportunity, and has a surplus available for other uses. Subsistence fishing is now on the full regulatory schedules in the Yukon River drainage (see subsistence schedule below).

Commercial fishing was postponed in the Lower Yukon Area while additional fish were allowed to migrate up river to assure adequate numbers for escapement and subsistence uses. At this time commercial fishing has resumed and will continue based on inseason assessment of run strength. When possible, the department may adjust the timing of the commercial periods as pulses of fall chum salmon are moving through each district. Otherwise the normal fishing schedule is Mondays and Thursdays in District 1 and Wednesdays and Sundays in District 2.

The fall season commercial salmon fishing season is open in Districts 3, 4, Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C, and in Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B. Processors, catcher-sellers, or direct marketers should notify the department of their intent to operate in any of these districts and subdistricts by contacting the Fairbanks office at (907) 459-7274.

Fall Commercial Salmon Fishing

Through August 19, eight fall commercial fishing periods have been announced in District Y-1 and six periods in District Y-2. Two commercial periods have been scheduled in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C.

Preliminary harvest information for District Y-1:

Period #8: District Y-1 Set Net Only Area, 9 hours (9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. August 19), remainder of District Y-1, 6 hours (12:00 noon until 6:00 p.m. August 19). Currently there is no harvest to report.

The cumulative harvest for Y-1 through August 18 is 77,584 fall chum and 9,339 coho salmon, and the incidental harvest (not sold) of Chinook salmon is 14 fish.

Preliminary harvest information for District Y-2:

Period #6: District Y-2, 6 hours (2:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. August 17). Preliminary verbals indicate a harvest of 12,339 fall chum salmon and 7,354 coho salmon.

The cumulative harvest for Y-2 through August 18 is 47,799 fall chum and 8,463 coho salmon, and the incidental harvest (not sold) of Chinook salmon is 24 fish.

Preliminary harvest information for Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C:

Period #2: Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C, 5-day period (6:00 p.m. Tuesday August 20 until 6:00 p.m. August 25). Currently there is no harvest to report.

The cumulative harvest for Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C through August 18 is 1,041 fall chum salmon.

Subsistence Salmon Fishing

For the current subsistence schedule please call **(toll free): 1-866-479-7387 or in Fairbanks call (907) 459-7387**. The current subsistence fishing schedules are as follows:

Coastal District: The Coastal District is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Districts 1, 2, 3: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day except for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after each commercial fishing period. Fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller during open subsistence salmon fishing periods.

The Innoko River: Subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Subdistrict 4-A (from $\frac{3}{4}$ miles downstream of Old Paradise Village upstream to Cone Point): This area includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Anvik, Grayling, Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk. Subsistence salmon fishing in Subdistrict 4-A is currently open 5 days per week from 6:00 p.m. Tuesdays to 6:00 p.m. Sundays. Use of drift gillnets to harvest fall chum salmon is allowed in that portion of Subdistrict 4-A from Stink Creek upstream to Cone Point during open subsistence fishing periods.

Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C (from Cone Point to Illinois Creek): This area includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Galena and Ruby. Subsistence salmon fishing is open 5 days per week from 6:00 p.m. Sundays to 6:00 p.m. Fridays.

In District 4, fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller during open subsistence salmon fishing periods.

Koyukuk River: Subsistence salmon fishing in the Koyukuk River is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B and 5-C (from Illinois Creek upstream to regulatory markers 2 miles downstream of Waldron Creek): Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C are open 5 days per week for subsistence salmon fishing. The subsistence salmon fishing schedule will be from 6:00 p.m. Tuesdays until 6:00 p.m. Sundays. Fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller during open subsistence salmon fishing periods.

Subdistrict 5-D (from an ADF&G regulatory marker 2 miles downstream of Waldron Creek upstream to the Hadweenzic River and including all adjacent tributaries): Subsistence salmon fishing is open 24-hours per day, 7 days per week. Fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less and all salmon may be kept when caught in fish wheels.

Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the regulatory marker at the mouth of Wood River, which includes the communities of Manley, Minto, and Nenana): This area includes the communities of Manley, Minto, and Nenana. Subsistence salmon fishing is open for two 42-hour periods per week from 6:00 pm Fridays until 12:00 noon Sundays and from 6:00 pm Mondays until 12:00 noon Wednesdays.

Old Minto Area: Subsistence fishing for salmon is open for one five day fishing period per week from 6:00pm Fridays until 6:00pm Wednesdays. Fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or smaller.

Subdistrict 6-C (from regulatory marker at the mouth of the Wood River upstream to the downstream mouth of the Salcha River, which includes the communities of Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha): This area includes the communities of Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha. Personal Use salmon fishing in Subdistrict 6-C is open from 6:00 p.m. Mondays until 12:00 noon Wednesdays, and from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 12:00 noon Sundays. Fisherman may use a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less.

During subsistence salmon fishing closures, fish wheels may not be operated and gillnets with a mesh size greater than four inches and a length greater than 60 feet must be removed from the water.

The subsistence fishing schedule and recorded fishery announcements will be available 24 hours a day at 1-866-479-7387 (toll free outside of Fairbanks); in Fairbanks, call (907) 459-7387. If you have any questions regarding this report, please call the ADFG office in Emmonak at 949-1320 or in Fairbanks at 459-7274. The Emmonak ADFG office will stand by on VHF channel 7A.

This has been an announcement by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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